

## POLITICAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY

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North, were as brave as men can be, and believed in their cause as earnestly. Many of the generals in the Confederate army he had known in the Academy at West Point or in the Mexican campaign. Magnanimous himself, he admired magnanimity in others. " Lincoln always showed a generous and kindly spirit towards the people of the South, and I never heard him abuse an enemy.\* No one knew better than Grant that he was working under a time limit. " Anything that could have prolonged the war a year beyond the time that it did finally close would probably have exhausted the North to such an extent that they might then have abandoned the contest and agreed to a separation/' Hence his intense desire to capture Richmond, the Confederate capital, the fall of which, he rightly believed, would be the signal for a general collapse.

There are many dramatic incidents in this story of the four years' war—the battle of Shiloh, the siege of Vicksburg, the carnage in the Wilderness, Sherman's march to the sea through Georgia—but there is nothing so moving in its simplicity as Lee's surrender at Appomattox Court House. The two men had served together in the Mexican war but had not met since.\*<sup>fi</sup> What General Lee's feelings were I do not know. As he was a man of much dignity, with an impassable face, it was impossible to say whether he felt inwardly glad that the end had finally come, or felt sad over the result and was too manly to show it. My own feelings, which had been quite jubilant on the receipt of his letter, were sad and depressing. I felt like anything rather than rejoicing at the downfall of a foe who had fought so long and gallantly and had suffered so much for a cause, though that cause was, I believe, one of the worst for which a people ever fought and one for which there was the least excuse. I do not question, however, the

sincerity of the  
great mass of those who were opposed to us. ...  
The much  
talked of surrendering of Lee's sword and my  
handing it back,  
this and much more that has been said about it  
is the purest  
romance." They talked about old army times, and  
the conver-  
sation grew so pleasant that Grant almost forgot  
the object of  
the visit. When the officers of the two armies  
met in great  
numbers, they seemed to enjoy it as much as  
though they had  
been friends separated for a long time while  
fighting battles  
under the same flag.

The assassination of Lincoln struck a deadly  
blow at the  
policy of conciliation favoured and planned by  
the President  
and the Commander in Chief " I knew his  
goodness of heart,